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CENTRAL STATES HOME-FURNISHING PROGRAM

March 1937

Excerpts From Extension Annual Reports on Home-Furnishing  
Aims, Procedures, and Results as Reported by Extension Workers  
in 1935 and 1936 Annual Reports

Assembled by Mary Rokahr  
Extension Economist, Home Management

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## CENTRAL STATES HOME-FURNISHING PROGRAM

### Excerpts From Extension Annual Reports on Home Furnishing

#### M A I N E

##### I. Needs, problems, objectives.

###### Outstanding problems:

The things that seemed to be troubling the women most were:

1. What color to paint floors and woodwork? Floor colors seemed to be especially troublesome. Many women had smooth floors that they wanted to paint and not to cover with linoleum.
2. How to get a good balance between figured and plain surfaces. Most country women have a decided tendency to get figures in everything they select.
3. How and where to introduce color. The women felt that their rooms were drab and the only method of improvement they seemed to think of was the use of bright colored cretonnes.
4. This question was asked several times. "What colors shall I use in a north bedroom where I am going to put my son?" Boys seem to be doomed to the north bedrooms.
5. The most outstanding problem in furniture arrangement was the arrangement of the small living room which entailed elimination. It seems to be hard for the women to take any of their cherished possessions, bric-a-brac, pictures, etc. out of the living room, no matter how unnecessary they may be.
6. Much furniture was found across corners, even very large pieces.
7. The widespread use of radios makes a problem in furniture arrangement since they must be placed near a window on account of the aerial.

Edna M. Cobb,  
Home Management Specialist.

#### O H I O

Needs.--A comparison of the average expenditures for furnishings and equipment in yearly summaries of the farm household accounts during the period 1931-35 revealed a trend toward an increase in these expenditures. The average amount of money of all families spent for furnishings and equipment during this period was greatest during 1935. Also the percent of total expenditures spent for furnishings and equipment was higher during 1935 than any other year of the

period. The summaries of these accounts revealed that the families having the lowest cash expenditures spent a higher percentage of their total expenditures for furnishings and equipment than the families having the highest cash expenditures, and only \$33 was spent by the average of the six high cash expenditure families.

There was a gradual increase in number of farm dwellings remodeled. There was a demand for a greater spread of information regarding arrangement of the house, its equipment and furnishings.

A study of the survey of rural housing showed that the character of rural housing was not entirely dependent upon income; other factors operated to determine the character and efficiency of housing.

Minnie Price,  
State Home Demonstration Leader.

#### M O N T A N A

As a result of wheat allotment checks and a real need for improving house furnishings which had become badly worn during the past several years, many homemakers were anxious to remake and improve the interiors of their homes. Since many families are tenants and many others have heavily mortgaged homes they were willing to improve quite extensively the furnishing which they could take with them should they move to a new home, but were willing to make only limited improvements in the house itself. Hence the interest in reupholstery, refinishing furniture, homemade furniture, slip covers, the living room and the family, commercial and homemade rugs, curtains and draperies, walls, woodwork and floor finishes. Emphasis was placed on the social value of the room in the development of individual members of the family.

Miss Florence Johnson, home demonstration agent of Rosebud County, wrote in her annual report: "A different method was used in 1935 to determine the program for the coming year (questionnaires had been sent to individual club members the previous year). The project leaders discussed phases of homemaking with the club members. After studying the needs of their communities they made a list recommending certain projects for the coming year. A copy of the list was given to the club president and a copy was sent to the home demonstration agent.

"Before the council meeting, Mrs. Gavin Robertson, president of the council, appointed a committee to report on the conditions in the county, outlook and needed projects. The following report was given:

Situation:

1. Prices higher in food, clothing, and fuel.
2. Rent about the same.
3. Farm products a little higher.
4. Home furnishings need replacing or repairing.
5. Home buildings need repairs.

6. Wages about the same.
7. Farmers have nothing to sell.
8. Food supply very low.
9. Meat supply low.
10. Higher taxes.
11. Chickens were reduced in number (shortage of eggs).
12. Very little money for amusements.
13. Physical condition run down because of lack of money for medical attention and proper food.
14. Clothing is very depleted.

Outlook:

1. Grain products will be higher.
2. Better farming conditions, more gardens.
3. Need to store and preserve a quantity of food.
4. Wages will be about the same.

The projects needed, among others, are -

1. Ways of getting the most for money in foods and home furnishings.
2. Dressing up furniture.
3. Bartering.
4. Practical handcraft.

"By using the project leaders' reports and studying the conditions given by the outlook committee the projects for the year were selected."

Oona Stautz,  
Margaret Tuller,  
Home Management Specialists.

K A N S A S

Personal rooms with personality.

The bedroom in the average farm home is perhaps the poorest equipped room in the house. A place for cast-off furnishings with little or no thought to the use of the room. The rooms lack personality.

The information given included a study of principles of design as they affect the background and furnishings of the room. Making the room fit the need of the individual was stressed in every case. That is, if the room is used by a child, it should be furnished to meet the needs of the child; if it is a boy's room it should be furnished with the boy in mind.

Ruth Peck,  
Home-Furnishings Specialist.

One of the outstanding results of the home-furnishings project is the aid it gives in upholding the morale of the families. Run-down furniture has a depressing effect on family life. To keep furniture in good repair costs, if done outside the home. As long as it will answer its purpose at all, no money will be spent, but when it gets beyond repair it is discarded, and usually replaced with something not quite so good.

Laura I. Winter,  
Home Demonstration Agent,  
Sedgwick County, 1935.

## O H I O

### Objectives of home furnishings.

To develop fine relationships of individuals within a home and within communities.

To develop healthful living through the use of well-designed houses, community buildings, lighting, and furnishings.

To broaden the knowledge and appreciation of all rural families in art and to have good principles of design and color incorporated in homes and community buildings.

To help develop as high a standard of living as possible in rural areas. The home-furnishings practices taught at any one time will necessarily vary, depending on the amount of money available in homes as well as on the social condition.

To make rural families more conscious of their housing problems in their homes and communities, and of the possibility of improving these conditions within their economic level.

To develop wholesome leadership among rural women and girls. To cooperate with other departments and agencies to better the State program of work.

To encourage rural families to evaluate community activities in relation to people concerned and to participate in wholesome community affairs.

To teach wholesome activities which people may carry on during their leisure time.

To help rural families solve such problems of living pertaining to health, family income, worth-while values in home and community life as they relate to the house and its furnishings.

To help rural families see their housing problems and to help them evaluate and solve the problems.

To broaden the vision of rural homemakers regarding the influence of furnishings of the house and community buildings on the family and community life; the relationship of the house to the habits and standards of living formed by children as well as their influence on the family comfort, interest, pride, and ability to excel.

To develop plans whereby a range of reading material relating to home-furnishings topics is available in communities taking the projects.

To encourage a discriminate reading of subject-matter material.

To develop an interest in a wise use of educational materials and institutions available within the community.

To develop an interest in rural life.

To develop an interest in and to encourage the preservation of old, worthwhile furnishings and other objects.

To improve skills in the use, care, selection, and construction of furnishings.

Minnie Price,  
State Home Demonstration Leader.

## II. Procedure.

### A. General.

## MISSOURI

### Methods of teaching subject matter.

1. Newspaper articles.--Prior to starting the work in any county, short articles suggesting the value of improving the homes are written and published in every paper in the county. The purpose of these articles is to get the "atmosphere" right for meetings to follow. From time to time other short articles are written indirectly calling attention to some sort of work to be given by giving just enough information to create interest in the work to follow.

2. A Question and Answer column has been used to call attention to many things that need to be done and many that should not be. The fact that the questions are supposed to be asked by bona-fide readers has aroused enough interest to insure their being read. Initials and address give the local touch.

3. A film strip is used at all meetings where ground improvement is advocated. These pictures show actual work done, many the "before and after." Color combinations, room improvement, and curtains are more interesting when slides are used.

4. Method demonstrations have proved successful, especially in hand work  
/and work

with refinishing furniture, reseating chairs, making slip covers, and other work with furniture.

5. Result demonstrations are effective in teaching room and ground improvement. Tours to visit these demonstrations insure widespread influence as well as information. Result demonstrations in the form of outdoor living rooms have interested women in Johnson and St. Louis Counties.

6. Training schools for leaders in all types of hand work and work with furniture have been effective in extending the work. Subject-matter is provided the leaders by the specialist so that the leaders do not need to take notes but can give their undivided attention to the work in progress. Always these leaders are requested to do the actual work at these training meetings.

7. Contests have been carried on between two groups, each having its captain, in the same community; between two separate communities; and county-wide ones. Scoring is done at the beginning, attention is called to needed changes, suggestions are made and reasons given by the scorer. These are scored at the close when the contestant tells what changes were made and why. The groups accompanying the scorers get the benefit of the suggestions and see the results.

8. Tours have been one of the best methods of reaching a certain type of individual - one who will not attend a meeting where information is disseminated or one whose mind is closed to all extension work. They look on a tour as a sort of roving picnic, and while attending will really learn something without realizing it.

9. Achievement days are useful in acquainting the general public with this type of work rather than instructional. They do help the spread of the work since they create a desire for it, and often result in leaders from one community being asked to train women in some other not previously reached.

10. Exhibits have been used successfully to show correct placing and painting of farm buildings, well planned plantings, good use of color, balanced furniture arrangement, correct curtaining, rug and picture placement, in room-improvement work.

11. Playlets, pantomimes, mock trials and similar performances have been useful, under the guise of entertainment, in calling attention to some of the needed improvements in the homes and at the same time suggesting plans for betterment. A "radio broadcast" was put on by a group in Knox County to emphasize some of the practices advocated by the specialist.

12. 4-H clubs.--These have been invaluable not only in furnishing instructions and information for the children but for the adults as well, who learn not only through team demonstrations, but directly from members of the clubs in their own family.

13. Home visits have proved very effective, since the attention of the

homemaker is focused upon her own problem and how she can attack it. The great disadvantage is lack of time.

Julia M. Rocheford,  
State Home Demonstration Agent.  
More Attractive Homes Project.

## AR K A N S A S

Housing.--Since the value of the majority of farm homes in Arkansas, as listed by the census, runs from \$284 to \$500, there is a great need for demonstrations in home improvement. The beauty, comfort, and convenience of a house and its facilities contribute much to the development of the people who inhabit it. If standards of living are to be raised, the average house must be improved.

1. Method.--The Extension Service needs to keep intact and working the loyal group of leaders in home improvement. Through the work of these leaders thousands of families are encouraged to take another step in the betterment of their homes. Some of these leaders have served over a long period of years and have acquired a knowledge of methods and of how to reach people and inspire them to enter into the spirit of housing campaigns. Among tenants and share cropper families it is difficult to find leaders. Many of our leaders have learned the technique of working with low-income families and are in this way able to obtain a program. Many of these low-income families have, all their lives, lived in very poor houses and they do not know the comforts and satisfaction to be obtained from higher standards in housing year after year. More and more of these people are being reached by our better-homes campaigns. This year the specialists set our definite programs for campaigns as follows:

Point 1. Conduct an educational campaign.

- a. Better-homes leader (chairman) to make a short report at each club meeting of plans and progress in housing improvements, both State and local.
- b. Facts regarding the program, date of Better Homes Week, housing conditions, and improvements being made shall be presented at each and every opportunity at community organizations such as Farm Bureau, Grange, Farm Improvement Clubs, County Council, P. T. A.
- c. News articles shall be sent to local papers regarding the campaign.
- d. Have good floor plans on exhibit in county office.

Point 2. County office acts as an information center, obtaining information on best and most economical ways of making improvements. (This material is available from Government and building agencies.)

- a. Organize a committee in each club to contact all members and nonmembers of the community regarding this program and report any improvements under progress.
- b. Contact low-income groups with information regarding sanitary toilets, safe water supply, inexpensive storage facilities for perishable food, inexpensive closets, home-made furniture, and approved clotheslines.
- c. Cooperate with State health department.

Point 3. Investigate the possibility of group buying of materials as will be used in quantity, such as paint, whitewash, window glass, roofing.

Point 4. Establish worth-while demonstrations in the community and county. The need for good examples cannot be overemphasized.

- a. Obtain cooperation of several persons, such as demonstrators, who are planning extensive repairs and who are willing to use best ideas and economical construction methods, keep records of cost, and willing to open their houses for a tour. An attractive, native architecture should be emphasized.
- b. Emphasize the goals in housing for several income levels.
- c. A planned program for each house, preferably written out.
- d. A higher type improvement in each higher level.

Point 5. Goals for families on minimum level income (largely tenant).

- a. Ceil overhead.
- b. Wall finish of some type (may be whitewash, corrugated cardboard and coldwater paint).
- c. Full-length screens at windows.
- d. Windows to be lowered at top.
- e. Safe flue.
- f. Solid steps leading to both entrances.

- g. Porch floor in good repair.
- h. Close cracks in wall, floor, and around windows and doorframes.
- i. Storage for canned foods.
- j. Storage for clothing.
- k. Intermediate level, all of above and in addition:
  - (1) Living room without bed.
  - (2) Sufficient sleeping rooms (define).
  - (3) At least three-fourths of house heated.
  - (4) Start on 5-year water system or continue installation.
  - (5) Concrete cooler for milk and foods.
  - (6) Built-in wood box.
  - (7) Service hall.
  - (8) Place for men to wash and hang wraps.
  - (9) Cross ventilation, all rooms.
  - (10) Paint or whitewash all outside surfaces.
- l. Adequate level, all of above and in addition:
  - (1) Sleeping porch.
  - (2) Refrigerator.
  - (3) Insulation against heat and cold, at least overhead.
  - (4) Built-in cabinet in kitchen.
  - (5) Storage space in every room.
  - (6) Central heating or at least some heat to supplement fireplace.
  - (7) Approved lighting.
  - (8) Combination smokehouse and storage room.
  - (9) Playground equipment.
  - (10) Side entrance to house.
  - (11) Parking area near house for car.
- m. Superior level, all of previous goals but of higher type:
  - (1) Mechanical refrigeration.
  - (2) Air conditioning.
  - (3) Recreational room.
  - (4) Extra sleeping room.
  - (5) Office.
  - (6) Sewing room.
  - (7) Servant quarters.
  - (8) Architecture of garage and out buildings should conform to residence architecture.
  - (9) Basement (if possible to keep dry)

- (10) Outdoor and indoor play equipment.
- (11) Lounging space for men in work clothes (may be on screened porch in summer).

2. Emphasize the conditioning of houses of tenants and rehabilitants.

Point 1. Conditioning houses.

- a. Making them warm. Repairing holes in floors, walls, windows, roof, and foundations.
- b. Organize a committee to collect usable material from stores and restaurants, as tin cans, boards, and cardboard.
- c. Filling cracks in walls, floors, etc., by making fillers of paper pulp, sawdust, and glue, mortar, and home-made putty.
- d. Weather stripping doors and windows. Use inner tubes, felt hats, cloth, or paper.
- e. Preparing house for cold weather. Make storm doors by covering screen door with heavy paper, oilcloth, or cotton sacks. Bank foundation with earth.

Point 2. Making houses clean and healthful.

- a. Suggesting general cleaning methods.
- b. Home-made supplies for use in cleaning.
- c. Devices and methods of ventilating.
- d. Getting the most for the fuel dollar.

Point 3. Making home convenient.

- a. Home-made furniture and equipment.
- b. Properly arranged furniture and equipment.

Point 4. Make a county-wide plan for improvement by selecting a number of improvements possible for a great number of people to accomplish.

- a. County committee to determine these factors such as: Paint, whitewash, screening, awnings, good steps, point up flues, proper heights of working surfaces, ratproof houses, add closet space, space for boots, work clothes, guns, etc.

- b. There should probably be three income levels considered in deciding this program and selection of the improvements to be made.
- c. Appoint a publicity committee to collect the information from local committees and assist with county report.

Point 5. That the executive committee adopt a safety in the home program, and cooperate with other agencies in making safer homes.

This is the first year that our campaign has extended to every county in the State, because there is a home demonstration agent in every county, and every county sent in a program of the accomplishments of this campaign. This campaign shows 1,382 rural leaders actually working on this program, 1,505 home demonstration clubs participating. 225 town leaders worked on this program. This included urban centers within the counties which we do not consider as rural. 665 meetings were held, with 4,668 people attending and assisting in developing the program to be used within the county. 46 of the 76 counties held better-homes schools, with an average attendance of 66 persons. 664 community schools were held with an average attendance of 12 people. 3,748 club programs were devoted to some phase of home improvement during the early part of the year. All this shows the work which was set up within the counties to improve the leaders, the programs, and the methods of interesting the community.

Ida A. Fenton,  
Extension Economist, Household  
Management, 1936.

## M A I N E

### Household Buying

#### Methods.

This project was conducted by a series of all day community meetings.

The subject offers an excellent opportunity for presentation of outlook material.

Together with charts from Washington and charts made from the Maine home-account summaries over a period of years, the trends in farm cash income, prices, and family cost of living were used as an economic background to teach better spending habits and guides for buying.

The type of furnishings studied included two groups:

1. Buying of sheets and pillowcases, blankets, mattresses, and springs, and

2. Buying of floor coverings, particularly linoleums, as this is the most usual type of floor covering purchased by farm women. The most important lesson taught in the buying of smooth floor covering was the difference between linoleum (inlaid and printed) and felt bases, which are usually thought of as linoleums.

There seems to be a decided interest in studying the label and in reading advertisements more intelligently. Reports have come from certain stores that they are at least conscious of the fact that consumers are asking questions and wish to cooperate.

Edna M. Cobb,  
Home Management Specialist.

### Making the House Homelike

#### Methods and procedure.

Two of the three subjects into which this project is divided were taught this year, the No. I meeting on Color and Design, and the No. II meeting on Furniture Arrangement.

#### 1. Color and design.

- a. A very full set of illustrative material was made up by the district agent, who used colored papers, fabrics, wallpapers, rugs, and pictures to show the use of color hue, value and intensity, and good design in the background of a room.
- b. Two days were spent by the district agent in each county carrying this project. One day was spent in directing and assisting the home demonstration agent to make a copy of the set of illustrative material and in explaining its meaning and use. The second day the district agent conducted the first meeting on color and design held in the county to train the home demonstration agent in the presentation of subject matter and illustrative material.
- c. The morning session was spent in teaching the theory of color, the afternoon in the application of this theory to rooms. Every major point in the lecture had its accompanying illustrative material so that the women could actually see what was being told. The women were asked to make color wheels for their own use at home.

#### 2. Furniture arrangement.

- a. The home demonstration agent made arrangements to hold these meetings at the homes of women who were willing for us to make changes in their furniture arrangement.

- b. The district agent conducted the first meeting held in each county to train the home demonstration agent in its presentation.
- c. The morning session was spent in the discussion of well equipped and properly placed furniture groups, elimination or concealment of structural defects, and elimination of unnecessary furniture, bric-a-brac, and pictures. In the afternoon the living room furniture was actually rearranged and each woman invited to score her living room on a score card provided for that purpose.

Edna M. Cobb,  
Home Management Specialist.

### O H I O

#### Teaching the project.

The problem project method was used to teach in each county. The types of meetings, kind and use of leadership and devices for teaching were determined within each county by the home extension council, county home demonstration agent, State home demonstration leader, and subject-matter specialist. In this way it was planned to fit the methods used to the social, economic, and geographical conditions as well as the type of subject matter.

Leadership was used in all counties for organization. In some counties leaders helped the agent to teach subject matter. A few leaders taught subject matter. The amount of subject matter they taught depended on their knowledge and interest in the subject. Leaders were appointed by the county home extension council and the county home demonstration agent.

Leaders are more and more active in an organization way, helping to determine methods of spreading work over the counties. Fewer are teaching subject matter. The manner in which leaders served in Warren County is described by the home demonstration agent as follows:

1. To obtain enrollment of the women who wished to bring a piece of furniture to the meetings in her township to learn to reupholster it.
2. To arrange a meeting place and date.
3. To relay to the women supplies furnished by the local reupholstery shop.
4. To keep records of such purchases.
5. To keep records of attendance.

#### Training agents.

The specialist held one State meeting for county home demonstration agents and women club agents. Subject-matter principles included in the current junior

program and methods for teaching subject matter were discussed and demonstrated. Judging products used as a teaching device to develop standards, as well as a basis for judging at county exhibits, were included in the meeting.

Minnie Price,  
State Home Demonstration Leader.

## M I C H I G A N

### Teaching methods.

During the year 1934-35, mimeographed outlines, which allowed space for writing in the main points of the lesson were given out at the beginning of each discussion both at leader-training classes and local group meetings. From the discussion, answers were formulated and written into the outline by leaders. At the local group meeting, the outline was used in the same manner. Though the specialist felt that the use of the outline did in some cases limit the discussion, the leaders felt that it was valuable in aiding them in giving more complete lessons and in keeping the group discussion on the most important points of the lesson.

Julia Pond,  
Extension Specialist in Home  
Management, 1935.

## I L L I N O I S

### Open meetings.

In 1935, the specialist spoke or gave a demonstration at 25 county-wide or open meetings with an attendance of 1,080. This type of meeting was held for any woman in a county who wished to attend. In some counties, an open meeting was arranged to supplement the home-furnishings project; in others it served as a follow-up after the completion of the project, or was held as a forerunner to interest women in the coming project.

Isabelle Hitchcock McGovran,  
Dorothy Iwig,  
Home-Furnishing Specialists.

### B. Demonstration homes and home visits.

## K A N S A S

Demonstration homes.-Demonstration homes were established in 15 counties carrying the family room-improvement work. There were 187 demonstration homes established in the State this year. A few years back it was most difficult to get the homemaker to allow her home to be used, today there are more homes

offered than the specialist has time for.

The specialist together with the agent, home-furnishing leaders, and members of the unit, hold a meeting in the demonstration home. The room under consideration, whether it be a family room, a personal room, or food-serving room is analyzed by the specialist and very definite plans are made for improving it. A score card is used in analyzing the room to determine the changes needed. However the score is not added and no total score is mentioned. Interest is not in whether "Mrs. Jones' room scores four points lower than Mrs. Brown's", but rather what problems this room presents in order to make it a comfortable place in which to live, and a room that will meet the family needs. Since incomes have been reduced the past few years no expensive changes are suggested. Emphasis is placed upon the fact that all changes need not be made in 1 year, rather, there may be a 2-, 3-, or 5-year plan before all the changes can be made. This one idea alone has interested many women in having their rooms used for demonstration purposes. After the room under consideration has been analyzed and plans are made for improvements, the members of the unit may bring up their individual problems. The specialist feels this meeting with unit members sells the project to each individual and paves the way for the home-furnishings leaders. A second check of the homes is made in the early fall by the specialist to see how the improvements are progressing and to offer further ideas as well as select the homes to be visited on the tour. The final tour, which is very often held in connection with the achievement-day program only offers time to visit two or three demonstration homes. In order that interested friends, prospective members, and members of the farm bureau may see the other homes, a "guest day" or open house is held in each home. At this time the homemaker, assisted by some of her unit members, explains the improvements that have been made and those that are planned for future years.

The unit on writing centers was my suggestion, for most of the women had no place to keep their project material and no place to write. Also, I wanted them to have a convenient place to keep accounts, for that is a subject for the future. The women were much interested and enjoyed the lesson. The accessories made were blotter pads, writing boxes, file boxes, and waste baskets.

Ruth J. Peck,  
Home-Furnishings Specialist, 1935.

## C A L I F O R N I A

Home visits were one of the most effective methods used in the project; there were 1,453. Office calls relative to the project totaled 1,399. Keeping notebooks and portfolios of subject matter has become a habit of great pride to the women, especially the local leaders. During the coming year they plan to make home-furnishing textbooks, which will not only include previously distributed literature but models of processes used in making various articles, patterns, samples of fabrics, and pictures or sketches of things they wish to build, make, buy, or use in their homes.

Jessie L. Decker,  
Home-Furnishings Specialist, 1936.

C. Training schools.

I L L I N O I S

Local-leader training schools.

The morning session of a local-leader training meeting in home furnishings was usually spent in a discussion of the subject. The afternoon was frequently conducted in the manner of a laboratory class with the leaders making illustrative material to use at their own meetings. In such training meetings as refinishing furniture, the leaders brought a piece of furniture and refinished it. If the lesson were on wall finishes, the leaders made samples of painted and stippled wall finishes by painting cardboard, and worked out charts showing wallpaper appropriate for various rooms. These charts the leaders used as illustrative material at their own unit meetings. For the phases of the project which dealt with buying, the specialist gave the women samples of different qualities of rugs, sheets, towels, curtains, upholstery, stuffing, and fabrics. At the close of the training school, the specialist summarized the subject matter and planned with the leaders the method of presenting the topic to their units.

Dorothy Iwig,  
Home Furnishings Specialist.

M I C H I G A N

Specialists training methods.

The training meetings for local leaders are held from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

At the beginning of each project the specialist spends part of the meeting in discussing "How to be a good leader" and "How to teach extension projects." At this time specific helps are given to the new as well as to the old leaders that prove successful in handling local groups.

Lessons are taught by the following methods: Lecture, discussion, demonstration, supervised practice of skills, or combinations of these different methods.

The specialists use fabrics and actual articles of furnishings as illustrative material whenever possible in order that the women may make examinations and comparisons. The leaders, in turn, collect articles to exhibit to their group members.

Each lesson is reviewed at the following training meeting and the leader's illustrative material is checked over.

Gertrude Reis,  
Alice McKinney,  
Extension Specialists in Home  
Furnishing.

M O N T A N A

D-1. Illustrative material.

To make it possible for project leaders to have illustrative material for use in home demonstration club meetings, during the past year additional kits were prepared for the meetings on "curtains and draperies" and "commercial and home-made rugs", bringing the number for each of the two subjects up to three. The kits were used with great success, being scheduled by the specialist for at least 1 month in a county. With the help of two home demonstration agents at large, it is the plan to prepare early in next year similar kits for other home-improvement subjects. In project-leader training meetings on other subjects than the two mentioned above, smaller amounts of illustrative material were used by the specialists and, whenever possible, were scheduled for club meetings and were returned by the agent to the State office when all clubs in the county had had the use of them. A "handcraft" kit was prepared during the year and was lent only to home demonstration agents for use in their handicraft meetings, as this subproject was limited to home demonstration agent counties.

Oona Stautz,  
Margaret H. Tuller,  
Home-Management Specialists.

I L L I N O I S

Home furnishings.

Bazaar Box.--An explanation of the "bazaar box" was given by the adviser at 27 meetings with 720 women present, the suggestion for this coming from the Money Creek unit. Any member deciding to contribute an article or product to the box will do so, keeping an account of the actual cost. These articles are passed around at the meeting so that each member has an opportunity to see them, and if she decides to make something she can ask for the pattern or copy the article. After the members have seen these articles, if anyone wishes to purchase anything out of the box they may do so, the price paid being determined by the home-furnishings chairman and a committee. The donor then receives the cost of the article and the balance is given to the unit, if the donor wishes to contribute the article the full proceeds will go to the unit. After the articles have been on hand several months, if they do not sell, they may be sold at auction. The box may be exchanged with other units for their box, the proceeds from the sales to go to the unit who owns the box. This is not compulsory but a suggestion for helping out the idea for Christmas and other gift suggestions. The units have not yet reported as to how much use they are making of this suggestion. However, at one unit when the box was brought out every article was sold.

Clara R. Brian,  
Home Adviser,  
McLean County.

C A L I F O R N I A

The Berkeley office has many fairly complete demonstration kits ready to lend to the home demonstration agents for their meetings. The kits contain subject matter for the discussion, an outline of procedure for the demonstration, full sized articles made or collected for illustration, and mimeographed and printed materials to distribute. The specialist has prepared the kits and has a subject-matter conference with the agents prior to her using the materials.

Jessie Lee Decker,  
Extension Specialist in Home  
Furnishing, 1936.

D-2. Exhibits.

I N D I A N A

Indiana State Fair exhibit.

"Your day's work depends much upon your night's rest" was the general caption for the 1936 State Fair exhibit, in which the home-furnishings specialist cooperated with Inez E. Kent, home-management specialist, who includes instruction on "beds and bedding" in her regular project.

Units displayed.

No. 1.--There's a Difference in Springs.

Using the size for single beds, three types were exhibited with captions setting forth qualities of each. They were (a) first, (b) coil with metal ties, and (c) coil with helical ties.

No. 2.--When You Buy a Mattress.

Samples of mattresses, both inner spring and non inner spring, with mica windows, showing filling materials, and types of construction, were displayed with informative labels.

No. 3.--Attractive and Suitable Bedding.

A corner fitted up as a section of a bedroom showed an attractively dressed bed. Light gray-green wall with matching woodwork provided an effective background for a maple bed with candlewick tufted spread in plaid design developed in rust and brown. A long, wool braided rug beside the bed had brown as the dominant color with variations of rust, tan, and green. The flower print hung above the bed was in rust and green framed with passé partout, mounted on cardboard strips to give a raised effect. Green with an inner binding of gold was used for the frame.

On the other corner wall a rack was hung in order to display on it folded articles for the bed, including mattress cover, mattress pad, sheet (108-inches length and so labeled), wool blanket, and wool-filled comfort, suggested to give maximum warmth with minimum weight.

Proved to be a family exhibit.

The exhibit attracted just as much attention from the men as from the women and, in numerous cases, sons and daughters of varying ages read the captions and made the comparisons with their own beds at home. Many young couples just furnishing homes and others not yet married but wondering what kind of equipment is best to buy, seemed delighted to find this exhibit, as it gave them a sense of direction in a rather confusing field.

The most common question was, Now, what shall I look for in an inner-spring mattress? The two most widespread (and wrong) impressions corrected by the exhibit were that: (1) Kapok is the best filling for a non inner spring mattress, and (2) springs in muslin pockets are best in the inner spring type.

It was interesting, however, to observe how many read the placards on these and verified the statements from their own experiences, often with a decided note of bitterness.

Blanche Zaring,  
Home Furnishing Specialist, 1936.

## I N D I A N A

A new plan was used for first-year achievement days. An exhibit featuring such adapted practices as women have done on walls redecorated, floors and wood-work refinished, furniture rearranged, cannot be exhibited by the women, so to provide something educational in the way of an exhibit and also promote interest in what will be given next year, it seemed desirable to tie it up with the future instead of the past.

The exhibit is made up of:

1. Small chair with slip cover; also pictures showing a shabby old chair before and after a new slip was added, and clippings from magazines showing attractive slips.
2. One braided wool rug and a braided table mat from old silk dresses.
3. One hooked rug and a hooked table mat from old silk hose, dyed.
4. A group of attractive accessories, one of which is a small picture framed according to instructions given in the fifth meeting of the coming year.

This exhibit has been enthusiastically endorsed.

Blanche Zaring,  
Home Furnishing Specialist, 1935.

### E. Cooperation with other agencies.

## O H I O

The specialist cooperated with W.P.A. teachers in planning the type of home-furnishings subject matter to include in their programs and suggested people who might help in teaching the subject matter.

The specialist served on the State board of the better-homes organization, and attended one meeting at which the future program of the organization was discussed.

The State library cooperated and sent available books used in the projects to the counties. These books were used by homemakers themselves. The number of books which the State and local libraries have on the subject matter is limited. Local libraries also furnish books to local groups in many counties.

Subject-matter information about renovation of water-soaked houses and furnishings in the flood area of southeastern Ohio was presented to a group of 16 W.P.A. teachers and supervisors of that district. These teachers used the information as they worked with the families in the flood area. The specialist wrote the home-furnishings subject matter and it was included in a pamphlet together with other phases of home-economics information written by other

specialists. The specialist consulted American Red Cross workers, local and State board of health workers, and visited flooded areas to determine needs of families in stricken areas.

Minnie Price,  
State Home Demonstration Leader.

## NEW JERSEY

An emergency request to assist in solving a curtain problem at the Jersey Homesteads, Hightstown, N. J., was presented to the State office by Mrs. Katherine Head, chief of the home-management section of Region I of the Resettlement Administration. The management specialist was advised to investigate the problem and render such assistance as she was qualified to give. Two home visits, a conference with the resident manager and with Mrs. Head, a shopping trip to obtain demonstration materials, and a conference with the interior decorator of a Philadelphia department store preceded this demonstration. We were indebted to the interior decorator of this firm who upon his own initiative volunteered to visit the settlement. After investigating this window problem, his very practical recommendations were telephoned to the specialist who passed these on to the group in her demonstrations.

The large window in question extended from ceiling to floor and occupied the full width of the combination kitchen-dinette, a very wide expanse to curtain effectively without an expenditure for materials somewhat out of keeping with the incomes of the families of the settlement. A group of 25 homemakers came to the demonstration. The windows in question were a sore point and the women were in need of very practical suggestions. They entered enthusiastically into the discussion and were very appreciative of the help given. The specialist plans to visit the homesteads in the near future to see what progress has been made.

Mary A. Mason,  
Specialist in Home Management,  
1936.

## ILLINOIS

### Commercial firms.

The specialist tried to keep a close check on any commercial demonstrations and displays that were used in connection with the project. Before scheduling any commercial demonstrator, the specialist investigated the material to be given to see that it would strengthen the project and not give the women a biased opinion as to its value. Commercial firms have been generous in lending demonstrators.

The educational department of many companies has furnished worth-while illustrative material. The following is a list of some companies which have furnished educational material.

Sears Roebuck & Co.  
Spool Cotton Co.  
Cotton Textile Institute.  
Benjamin Moore Paint Co.  
Lowe Bros. Paint Co.  
Imperial Wall Paper Company.  
Mayflower Wall Paper Company.  
Marshall Field and Company.  
Celanese Corporation.

Dorothy J. Iwig,  
Home Furnishing Specialist.

### III. Project Phases.

#### Buying Household Linens.

### K A N S A S

Mrs. Laura I. Winter gives an interesting account of the lesson held in Sedgwick County. "One outstanding result of this lesson is the fact that the heads of the domestic departments in the stores of Wichita, Kans., know that the women of the Sedgwick County Farm Bureau are out after information for consumers. Mrs. H. S. Hutson was the first leader to visit the stores; she took a day to do it. At the store, the man in charge was not exactly courteous at first, but when he found that Mrs. Hutson could ask intelligent questions, he started giving the answers, becoming more interested as the conversation continued. He gave much more information than Mrs. Hutson had hoped to get. The other heads of departments she visited that day, after they understood that it was a genuine seeking for knowledge rather than mere curiosity that prompted the visit, did likewise. All agreed they were glad that the women were making the study, and felt a better understanding would be valuable both to the distributor and the consumer.

Mrs. Hutson and the other leaders found that all the information needed on a label is available in the office of the buyer, but since demand from the consumer has been lacking, this information has not been used on labels by many of the manufacturers.

Three other leaders, Mrs. R. V. Biggs, Waford Unit; Mrs. Sibil Nighswonger, Viola Unit; and Mrs. Jennie Hudspeth of the Sunshine Unit, all visited the store in a period of 4 days following Mrs. Hutson's visit.

These visits had not been planned this way, but each leader had the same idea, and after the first visit the department heads gave out labels and other printed material which supplemented that given by Miss Peck."

"All the leaders made a collection of advertisements on sheets and towels from magazines covering a period of years, attracting the women's attention to how little real information is given in the attractive wording of the advertisements. The trend for keeping up was in evidence - catchy phrases regarding thread counts, strength, weight, sizing, but no positive statements. Eye appeal held the center of the stage.

The most important result which comes from such information, is creating the desire to know the truth regarding factors essential in one's everyday living. Telling people things never makes a lasting impression, unless they can be awakened to think and investigate for themselves. Home demonstration work in Sedgwick County has had as the goal in all project work, better informed people through their own efforts.

Ruth J. Peck,  
Home-Furnishings Specialist.

#### O H I O

Home-furnishings cost records were started in five counties; through these studies families are given assistance with arranging their homes to be not only comfortable but also to provide for best use of time and energy in daily living. Wise and economical selection of furnishings was also included in each project. At the end of the year a careful study of the home-furnishings cost records may reveal wise and less wise expenditures. It is planned to use these records in future consumer studies.

Minnie Price.  
State Home Demonstration Leader,  
1936.

#### O H I O

##### Home-made floor coverings.

It is the purpose of the project (1) to give suggestions on suitability of color and design for floor coverings; (2) to study suitability of floor coverings to room and plans necessary before making rugs; (3) to give suggestions about equipment, preparation of material and construction of floor coverings that may be made at home; (4) and to suggest ways of caring for rugs; (5) to suggest a wise use of leisure time.

At the first group of meetings, subject matter of a general nature was presented to include the following types of rugs - braided, crocheted, and hooked. Enrollments were taken at these meetings where assistance is to be given on design and construction. The general meeting was presented by the home agent. For the construction meeting, leaders were selected in all communities of the county to help with the braided and crocheted rugs. The home agent

presented to communities the meeting on hooked rugs. A leaders' training meeting was held to assist in the teaching of crocheted and braided rugs.

To bring these projects to the attention of the people the following means were used:

- (1) Letters to mailing lists.
- (2) Letters announcing projects to all presidents of organizations.
- (3) Announcements at meetings.
- (4) Subject-matter items in newspapers.

Jessie E. Bourne,  
Home Demonstration Agent,  
Auglaize County, Ohio.

IV. 4-H club home improvement.

Home Furnishing 4-H Club Work

1935

Central States	Number of club members enrolled	Number of club members completing	Number of units completed	
			<u>Rooms</u>	<u>Articles</u>
Ohio	1,250	1,069	825	2,106
Indiana	416	351	323	2,098
Kentucky	136	108	41	570
Illinois	153	143	103	292
Michigan	535	512	332	1,602
Wisconsin	491	375	215	1,148
Minnesota	946	704	561	2,843
Iowa	3,002	2,614	3,854	9,744
Missouri	170	147	142	961
North Dakota	798	584	298	1,908
South Dakota	1,183	628	---	3,449
Nebraska	1,342	948	843	4,383
Kansas	719	469	411	1,755
TOTAL, four regions				
Central States	11,141	8,652	7,948	32,859
Eastern States	6,460	5,176	2,395	18,741
Southern States	78,599	44,733	28,333	153,070
Western States	1,440	1,051	908	4,900
TOTAL	97,640	59,612	39,584	209,570

The statistical story of home-furnishings' extension work would not be complete without a study of the statistics on 4-H club work. What are the needs of 4-H club girls in relation to the general home-furnishings program? Are these needs being satisfied? What are the limiting factors? How can these be overcome in relation to the general organization of the work? Organization of the subject matter?

## NEW YORK

### Relationships.

Special effort has been made this year to correlate more closely the different phases of the foods, clothing, and room-improvement projects, and now perceptible progress can be cited.

Examples of this are: Emphasis by the foods and nutrition specialists on furnishings for the table, such as table doilies, dishes, and flower arrangement, which involve problems in sewing and in combining colors and materials harmoniously; and emphasis by the clothing specialists on care of clothing, with special reference to storage, including closets and their equipment. The room-improvement specialist has welcomed and encouraged every tendency to overlap and interrelate projects of all departments, because it seems to be the natural way for young people in their homes to face the many problems of right living.

A marked example of a close relationship this year has been that between this program and the better-lighting project. After the success of the better-lighting program at Farm and Home Week in February, it was decided to carry it on to the younger women by means of their State Club Congress program in June. The specialist responsible for the first program assisted with the second, and the results were highly satisfying. After the State fair, discarded kerosene lamps with home-made shades lost favor overnight, and the newer type of inexpensive pin-it-up lamps appeared in many rooms and in all meritorious exhibits in county and State fairs.

Closely related to this problem of lighting was the newly incorporated 4-H club project to save eyestrain through the making of a simple book rack for desks in boys' and girls' rooms and in schools.

The appeal to parents of such practical health suggestions gave speedy impetus to these home-furnishings projects.

### Problems and needs.

Many old homes lack clothes closets, and the adults have not had the imagination or courage to correct this deficiency. In spite of all that has been done by magazines and through extension work, every new group of local leaders presents a new field of opportunity, for many country farmhouses are still without adequate storage space for clothing.

Beds in many homes are found to be far from comfortable and healthful for growing young people, to say nothing of the ugliness and shabbiness of the old bedsteads which find their way particularly into the children's rooms.

The making of dressing tables from orange crates has been greatly over-emphasized but invariably local leaders argue for this "simple luxury" which they say almost every girl craves, and which even they as adults in many cases still desire.

Many old dressers need remodeling to provide better storage spaces, and to make them more attractive and up-to-date. Top drawers could often be improved by fitting them with partitions such as many housewives are now using for kitchenware and silver, and no doubt this idea will spread.

Since old rugs should be discarded for sanitary reasons, and to lighten the job of cleaning, need is felt for replacing them, as can frequently be done advantageously by the use of simple, inexpensive but beautiful rag rugs, home-made or commercial. Shabby, worn, old floors in many homes are in need of refinishing.

Most young people's rooms lack desks and shelves for the storage of books, papers, and other personal belongings, necessitating clutter. An easy solution to this problem is to remodel and recondition old washstands and small tables which are available at small or no cost at all.

Accessories of any value or of good quality are practically nonexistent in many girls' rooms. Fundamental improvements such as papering and painting invariably lead to a desire for some colorful and attractive accessories, such as scarfs, boxes, chair pads, and curtains.

Greater than any of the afore-mentioned problems or needs, is the need for young people to have more pride and satisfaction in their home surroundings at an age when they would be encouraged, even by simple improvements such as we provided for in this program, to entertain themselves and their friends more often in their homes. Another need is a greater awareness on the part of mothers of the necessity for permitting their young people to grow up, to take responsibility along with jobs, to be able to express themselves rather than to be expected always to appreciate things done for them.

Another problem is how to give members of a family a clear understanding of the meaning of cooperation, sharing, and helpfulness. Instead of being only helpful some one may do the work for the club member leaving him without the satisfaction of an achievement of his very own, which he can exhibit at fairs, where awards are supposed to be made on the club members' own work.

No other phase of the homemaking club work has touched the home and family relationships more closely than the room-improvement work because of its very nature and so long as the program is limited to older girls and the emphasis is wholly upon work in actual homes, this will be true.

#### Methods and accomplishments.

#### Outstanding work.

In room improvement, Rensselaer County still leads the State. Recently a tour of girls was conducted to a group of rooms, each of which showed outstanding improvement, not with the idea that they were finished, but that some worthwhile things had been done. Such demonstrations have been a most effective

teaching method. In addition to the tour designed to spread the work in the county, another was taken over the same route by selected local leaders and their agents from three adjoining counties.

Because of the spreading interest it will not be necessary for each county to start from the bottom, since county lines do not stop the contagion. It will be enough to find a county with possibilities for developing a program fairly rapidly in a few districts of the State.

An outstanding feature of the State work this year resulted from the practice of holding district demonstration try-outs and selecting four girls to demonstrate at the State fair. The work chosen to demonstrate at the fair was "what to do with old chairs." Two girls did high-grade work in putting in cane and splint seats. One of them has been invited into several counties, even across the State, to teach other club girls chair seating, and has been paid a small sum in addition to her expenses. Besides directing this work, she is refinishing old furniture working with a county-wide group in her own county. She has had several pieces of work come to her at regular prices from outside persons.

Nancy M. Roman,  
Clothing Specialist, 1936.

#### V. Professional improvement.

### I O W A

Regular conferences with the resident staff have helped us to place emphasis on points where emphasis was needed. They have helped us to get better designs for various lessons, and to keep our subject matter up-to-date. These conferences have made us realize that closer contact with the resident staff means better work for both, because it gives us a better understanding of each other and a better understanding of the work both here and out in the field.

Miss Workman had contact with the resident staff through another 6 weeks' summer-school course last summer. This helped a great deal to compare the teaching methods of the resident staff with those of our home-furnishing department. One special problems course was taken, in which ideas were worked out for two new courses in the home-furnishing project, which will be ready to teach in the fall of 1936.

Nora Workman,  
Home Furnishing Specialist, 1935.

VI. Annual narrative summary.

N E W Y O R K

Extension work in housing.

The housing program, which is becoming increasingly a family project for home improvement, aims particularly to help families to use material and furnishings already on hand in creating a more useful and satisfying home, to develop the homemaker's judgment in the purchase of new furnishings, and to encourage the homemaker to carry her new ideas into the community. The work at present includes (1) home conferences, (2) lighting, and (3) training for buying.

An earlier project, the study of rearrangement of living-room furniture for the greater comfort and convenience of each member of the family, has led to a study of other rooms in the house; and from this has developed work in refinishing and reconditioning furniture, the making of slip covers, the mixing of colors and the devising of color schemes, the making of household accessories, and the treatment of walls, floors, and windows. Home conferences are held where individual problems are considered, with the whole group participating and benefiting from the suggestions made in each home.

The new Federal plan for rural electrification has given impetus to the lighting project in two directions: to help persons who are about to use electricity for the first time in their homes, in the planning and placing of outlets and in the selection of lamps and fixtures; and to instill in the minds of all users of electricity the desire for eye health and for a knowledge of habits which will conserve sight. In cooperation with the State college of agriculture, trained women from the college of home economics have held county-wide or district meetings in areas where new electric lines are being put through. A bulletin on home and school lighting, and periodic news letters, are to be sent from the college and used at home conferences, and, if possible, county tours will be made to demonstrate practical home and farm wiring. In the latter part of June a lighting training-school was held, to help agents and county leaders with the development of a lighting program in their own counties. This program affords one more way of reaching persons who may thus become interested in the ultimate goal of home improvement.

With the gradual lessening of economic stress, and with the background obtained from earlier work in various home-improvement projects, a new development in the program is that of training homemakers so to buy that they may get the best quality for their money when purchasing household furnishings. The first work of this nature is to be carried on experimentally with women in Buffalo, with Erie County participating. Film strips and kits of actual fabrics will be used to study good design, quality, and color; rooms will be studied before any purchases are made, in order that new things may be harmonious with the old; trips to shops will be made, for an exchange

of ideas between buyers and clerks; and factories and stores will be visited for studies in the quality of household furnishings such as rugs, draperies, upholstery, bed linens, fabrics, blankets, pottery, dishes, and glassware.

Eleventh Annual Report, 1936

New York State College of Home  
Economics at Cornell University.  
Carl E. Ladd, Dean  
Flora Rose, Director.

